(b) the number of bills and amount which are in order;

(c) the number of bills and the amount of arrears outstanding to DAVP for the years 1991, 1992, 1993 and 1994 as on 31.5.95; and

(d) what are the reasons for delaying or for not making the payment for the same yet?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI P.A. SANGMA): (a) and (b) The number of advertisement bills for the year 1994-95 received as on 23.11.95 are 40003. Of these 34,826 bills amounting to Rs. 7.42 crores have been passed for payment as they were found in order. The remaining bills amounting to Rs. 1.68 crores are at various stages of scrutiny.

(c) and (d) Payment of advertisement bills is a continuous process. Bills found not in order are returned and those found in order are paid. The pendency position as on 31.5.1995 is not available. However, as on 23.11.1995, 13,312 bills pertaining to the years 1991 to 1994 are in the various stages of processing.

Reduction in Excise and Customs Duties

*39. SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE:
SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have made any assessment about the extent of relief package offered to manufacturers in the Budget proposals for 1995-96 by way or reduction in excise and customs duties which has been passed on by them (manufacturers) to the consumers;

(b) if so, what is Government's assessment and how it compares with the corresponding assessment during 1994-95 and 1993-94;

(c) whether any lack of response on the part of manufacturers to pass on such relief to consumers was noticed, if so, what steps have been taken by Government against defaulting manufacturers; and

(d) what measurers were taken by Government to ensure the reliefs due to the consumers on this account?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) to (d) The Government have not made any detailed study of the extent to which the reduction in excise and customs duties offered in 1993-94; 1994-95 and 1995-96 budgets have been passed on by the manufacturers to the consumers. However, the names of major commodities and the extent of excise duty reduction in respect thereof announced during the last three budgets are given in the Statement I, II and III respectively (see below). As regards customs duties, broadly speaking, their rates were lowered in respect of inputs used in the manufacture of both consumber goods and industrial goods. The Incidence of customs duties in these cases gets included in the cost of final product.

On the basis of BICP's studies, made on sample basis, in respect of select commodities, it is observed that manufacturers of some of these commodities did not pass on the benefit of duty relief to the consumers. However, there is no legal mechanism to enforce reduction in prices to the extent of reduction in excise duty where there is no price control. At the same time with a view to protect the interest of consumers in respect of pre-packed commodities, the following steps have been taken by the Ministry of Civil Supplies, Consumer Affairs and Public Distribution:—

1. Advertisement has been issued in the National Newspapers inviting the attention of the manufacturers of pre-packed commodities to pass on the benefit or recent tax cuts to consumers.

2. All the Chief Ministers of the States and UTs have been requested to take necessary steps under the rules to ensure that the consumers are not charged more than the revised prices announced by the manufacturers.

3. The Presidents of all the four apex Industry Associations have been requested to ensure that their members pass on the benefits of duty concessions to the consumers.

4. All the Secretaries in charge of Weights and Measures Department in the States and Union Territories have been requested to ensure strict implementation of the provisions of the Standards of Weights and Measures (Packed Commodities) Rules, 1977.

The other administrative Ministries as well as the Ministry of Civil Supplies, Consumer Affairs and Public Distribution also hold discussions with the trade and Industry and take other measures in this regard as also to monitor prices.

Statement-I

Major Duty concessions announced in Budget 1993-94

Commodity	Excise Duty	
	Pre-Budget	Post-Budget
1	2	3
Vanaspati and margarine	Rs. 1900/ton	Rs. 1500/ton
Noodles and Similar products	17.25%	10%
Biscuits etc.	11.50%	7.50%
Marble slabs	Rs. 12.08/sq. mtr	Rs. 10/sq. mtr
Synthetic Organic dyes	34.50%	25.00%
Paints & varnishes	40.25%/23%	35%/20%
Ink	17.25%	10%
Cosmetics and toilet preparations	120.75%	70%
Tooth powder	17.25%	10%
Matches	**Rate in Rs. per 100 boxes of 50 sticks each**	
Mechanised	3.15	2.40
Semi-mechanised	2.10	1.25
Non-Mechanised	1.75	1.00
Cottage	0.75	0.50
Plastic Resins	46%	35%
Plastic moulded luggage	34.50%	25%
Suitcases	28.75%	25%
Plywood	34.55%	20%

Commodity	Excise Duty	
	Pre-Budget	Post-Budget
	2	3
PFY	80.60/kg	69/kg
NFY	71.50/kg	57.50/kg
PPFY	32.50/kg	28.75/kg
PSF	13.65/kg	12.65/kg
VSF and ASF	15.60/kg	14.95/kg
NSF	59.15/kg	14.95/kg
Specified panel boards	17.25%	10%
Refrigerators	Rs. 575/1725/4025/5750 per refrigerator	Rs. 400/1200/2500/3500 per refrigerator
Refrigerating appliances	69%	20%
Specified parts of refrigerating and air conditioning appliances	46%	30%
Air Conditioners	Rs. 13800/17250/37950/ 80500/85100 per air conditioner	Rs. 7000/8000/9000/14000/ 31000/65000/70000 per air conditioner
Electric fans	17.25%	10%
Evaporative air coolers	23%	10%
Dry cell batteries	34.50%	25%
Colour TV sets Screen size	**Rate per set**	
Not exceeding 36 cms	Rs. 1925/2200	Rs. 1250/1500
Exceeding 36 cm but not exceeding 55 cms	Rs. 2860/3135/4785	Rs. 1950/2200
Exceeding 55 cms	55%/49.5%	25%
Video projector and video monitors	27.50%	25%
Colour picture tube	Rs. 1375/1484	Rs. 700/800
Radio sets	23%	10%
Domestic electrical appliances	23%	15%
Cars	55%	40%
Musical Instruments and their parts	17.25%	10%
Articles of bedding and similar furnishing of cellur rubber	69%	30%

Statement-II

Major Duty concessions announced in Budget 1994-95

Commodity	Excise Duty	
	Pre-Budget	Post Budget
1	2	3
Yeast	15%	10%
White Cement	40%	30%
S.O. Dyes	25%	20%
Plastic based paints	35%	30%
Fluorescent brightening agent etc.	35%	20%
Unformulated/Unstandardiseds/ Unprepared dyes	60%	20%
Cosmetics & toilet preparations	70%	50%
Detergent powder	35%	30%
Starches etc.	45%/ 30%	20%
Bulk Polymers	35%	30%
Vaneered panels & similar laminated wood	30%	20%
Densified wood & article	25%	20%
Flush doors	35%	20%
Carpets—floor coverings	35%	30%
Linolium & other textile floor coverings	35%	30%
Footwear & parts	20%	15%
Glazed ceramic tiles	55%	40%
Aluminium		20%
Car Airconditioners	75%	60%
Insulators/Primary batteries	40%	30%
Electric wires & cables	35%	30%
Optical fibres & cables	35%	20%
Taxis	33%	30%
Typewritter ribbon	30%	20%
Cellular rubber and articles	70%	30%
Computer parts	25%	20%
Parts of motor vehicles	25%	20%
Electronic games	35%	15%
Cars for physically handicapped	40%	30%
Lamps and light fittings	40%	20%

Statement-III

Major items of general Consumption on which duty was reduced in 1995-96 Budget

Commodity	Excise Duty	
	Pre-Budget	Post Budget
1	2	3
Aerated waters	50%	40%
Antiseptic creams	30%	20%
Aluminium & its article	20%	15%
Articles of asbestos cement	30%	25%
Audio tape deck machanism	25%	20%
Audio/Video megnetic tapes	30%	20%
Ball Bearings	20%	15%
Ceramic laboratory wares	30%	20%
Certain floor converings	30%	20%
Cocoa and cocoa preparations	25%	20%
Cosmetics	50%	40%
Decorative laminates	30%	25%
Dry cell batteries	25%	20%
Fireworks	20%	15%
Glass containers	30%	20%
Glass & glassware produced by mouth blown process	20%	10%
Glazed cermics	30%	20%
Glazed Tiles	40%	30%
Household porcelain and chinaware	30%	15%
Insulated wires and Cables	30%	25%
Leather cloth	35%	25%
Malt based food preparations	25%	20%
Mattress supports, articles of bedding	30%	25%
Parts of motor vehicles and two wheelers	20%	15%
Perfumed hair oil	30%	20%
Plastic Resins	30%	25%
Polyester Filament Yarn	69%	57.5%
Polymer based paints	30%	20%

1	2	3
Rubber pipes and tubes	30%	25%
Sewing thread (nylon or polyester blended)	34.5% 69%	23%
Sharbat, thandai & similar products	50%	20%
Travel sets for personal toilet	50%	40%

Steps to encourage Tourism in Punjab

*40. SHRI IQBAL SINGH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) what steps have been taken by the Central Government to encourage tourism in the State of Punjab;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) to (c) The development of tourism is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments. However, Central Department of Tourism sanctioned Rs. 471.65 lakhs for development of tourism infrastructure in the State of Punjab during the Eighth Five Year Plan.

In addition information on tourist places in Punjab are included in the publicity material produced by the Department of Tourism.

Failure of Southern Grid

113. SHRI SANATAN BISI: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) what are the reasons for the failure of Southern grid during mid November which hit four States; and

(b) whether any inquiry was conducted for such failure?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI URMILABEN CHIMANBHAI PATEL): (a) On 14.11.1995, at 08.14 hrs. due to a grid disturbance in the Southern Region, there was total black out in Karnataka and a partial blackout in Andhra Pradesh. The Tamil Nadu and the Kerala systems islanded and survived.

As per first information received from POWERGRID, in the Srisailam—Tallapalli 220 KV ckt—I transmission line of APSEB, a conductor snapped and a cross arm fell causing all lines from Srisailam to trip. Consequently all units at Srisailam H.E.P. also tripped, causing a dip in frequency and further tripping of some other CHV lines and generating units in other parts of the grid.

(b) While no formal Committee has been constituted for enquiring into the above grid disturbance, the Standing Protection Committee of SRED is looking into it.

Banks to go on strike

114. SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA:
SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA:
SHRI GAYA SINGH:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that four major unions in the public sector banking industry have decided to go on strike from December 19 to press their demand for reconstruction of pay scales for clerks and sub-staff; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and what steps are being taken to avert the strike?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (DR. DEBI PROSAD PAL): (a) While no formal notice has been received by the concerned authorities till 24th November, 1995, there are reports to the effect that the 4 major unions representing workmen in the banking industry are contemplating a stike from December 19, 1995 in support of their demands.

(b) The Unions have sought, *inter-alia* re-construction of pay scales for clerical staff and sub-staff consequent on the agreement between the Indian Banks'